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ROYAL PORTRAITS

with an introduction and notes by

R. H. WILENSKI

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ROYAL PORTRAITS

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Plate 1

HENRY VIII

Born 1491. King of England 1509–1547

HOLBEIN

Castle Howard Collection

Holbein was court painter to Henry VIII from 1536 to the autumn of 1543; and a number of portraits of the King by, or ascribed to, him survive. The Castle Howard portrait reproduced here is dated 1542 and thus shows the King at fifty-one, much older, fatter and less aggressive-looking than in earlier portraits where, as in the full length acquired during the war by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, he stands astride displaying the calves he was so proud of, in the costume most familiar to us, at the age of forty-six. The Liverpool portrait is of the character referred to by Karel Van Mander when he wrote, in 1604: "Among the pictures which Holbein painted for Henry VIII is an excellent portrait of His Majesty, full length, life size and so life-like that everyone who sees it is frightened"; for Henry in that picture is clearly about to blurt out his terrible "Ha" which, we know from Shakespeare, roused hopes or fears, both well founded, according to its timbre.*

But the Henry of the Castle Howard portrait in the long red mantle is a man who has known ill health; he had an attack of a tertian fever in 1541 and he had suffered from a recurrent fistula in his leg which at times made him speechless and deep purple in the face from pain; and his periodic efforts to fight obesity by rising at half-past five in the morning and riding hard till ten had been in the long run unavailing, as this portrait proves. Between the Liverpool portrait and this one he had also suffered domestic disappointments; Queen Jane Seymour died in 1538 and he had remained a widower for two years; he had married and divorced Queen Anne of Cleves; and he had married Queen Catherine Howard and executed her for infidelity in February of the year in which our picture is dated. For these reasons, and perhaps because he felt at this moment a little sickened by thoughts of the many heads he had caused to be cut off, he now appeared to the painter a more sober—though still of course a most formidable—figure.

The Castle Howard portrait roused much controversy among the experts in 1933 when it was exhibited in London after restoration. Part of a Holbein signature and the last two figures of the date are on the gold-headed staff just above the King's left hand.

The last portrait of the King by Holbein is the large unfinished group *Henry VIII presenting the Charter to the Barber Surgeons Company* painted 1542–1543; this is still the property of the Company—perhaps because Pepys who, in 1669, toyed with the idea of buying it for £200, decided that he had no mind to it 'because it is so spoilt and not a pleasant though a good picture'.

* *Henry VIII.* Act I. Sc. ii. KING: *Ha! what, so rank? Ah, ha!*
Act II. Sc. ii. KING: *Who am I? ha?*
Act III. Sc. ii. SUFFOLK: *The King cried 'Ha' at this.*
LORD CHAMBERLAIN: *Now God incense him*
And let him cry 'Ha' louder. . . .

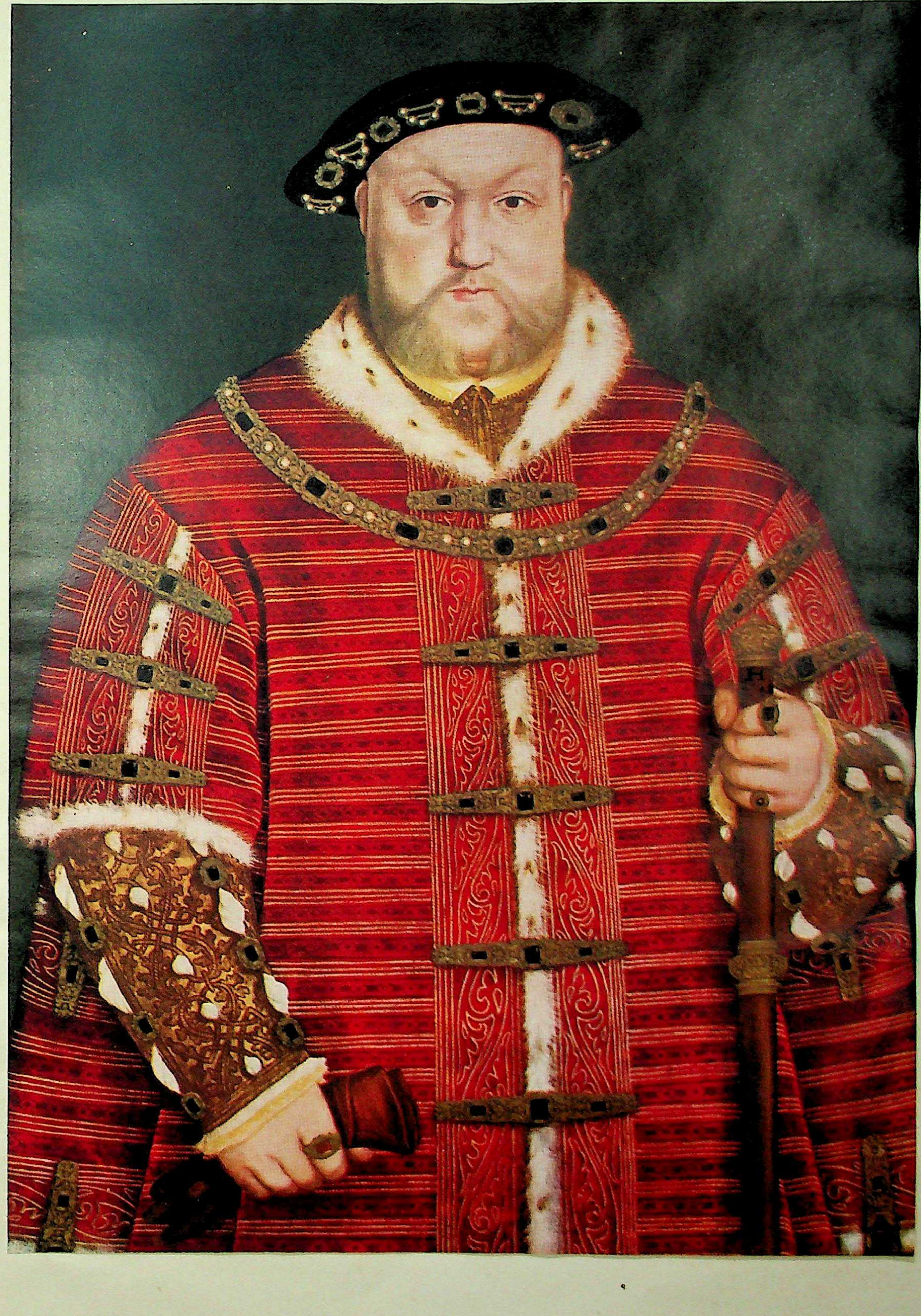

Plate 2

MARY TUDOR QUEEN OF FRANCE

Born 1496. Queen of Louis XII 1514–1515. Died 1533

ARTIST UNKNOWN—PRESUMED FRENCH

London: National Gallery (2615)

The delicately featured lady, placed here between those two tremendous personalities, King Henry VIII and the Emperor Charles V, was sister to the one and affianced at the age of twelve to the other (then Charles, Prince of Castile aged eight). Six years later dynastic intrigues, in which these children were counters, had prevented Mary's marriage to the boy Charles and had betrothed her instead to Louis XII King of France, who was fifty-two and decrepit (and is described by Corvo as "a thin man with fat neck and lip, and an Ethiopic nose, and exquisite attire"). For this marriage she crossed to Boulogne in October 1514, with an escort of six hundred gentlemen and eighty ladies in attendance; her ship ran aground attempting to enter Boulogne harbour and she was carried ashore by her gentlemen. The marriage took place at Abbeville a week later. Louis dismissed all his wife's English attendants the next day, because he objected to court extravagances, saying to those who charged him with parsimony "*J'aime mieux voir les courtisans rire de mon avarice que les peuples pleurer de mes dépenses.*" In November Mary was crowned and there was jousting in Paris; seven weeks later the King died (January 1, 1515).

The widowed Queen, now eighteen, was, as this portrait shows, exquisitely attractive; and the new King Francis I at once began to court her. But she was snatched from him by the handsome Englishman, Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk, to whom she had already given her real affections in England. The Duke now came to Paris, married her before the year was out, took her back to England and allayed King Henry VIII's displeasure by the gift to him of her jewels and a promise of £24,000 (to be paid in half-annual instalments). Thereafter the couple took their places at the English court where Mary's dancing in masques on state occasions was applauded. In 1516 'the French Queen', as she was known in England, became the mother of a daughter, who in turn became the mother of Lady Jane Grey. It was her husband Suffolk who, with others, broke the news to Wolsey of his fall by demanding the Great Seal from him (*Henry VIII.* Act III. Sc. ii).

Mary probably sat for the drawing from which this portrait was painted in the brief period while she was a Queen. The picture possibly represents her (as was often done then) as St. Mary Magdalene. But more probably she holds in her hand not the saint's pot of unguent but a casket containing the jewel known as 'The Mirror of Naples' given her by Louis. She was thirty-seven when she died.*

* Mary Tudor is named as the sitter for this portrait in an inscription (said to be in a nineteenth-century hand) on a label on the back. It has been suggested that the artist was Jean Perréal, who was sent to London in 1514 to adjust Mary's trousseau; but this is purely a guess because there are no known pictures by this artist with which to compare it.

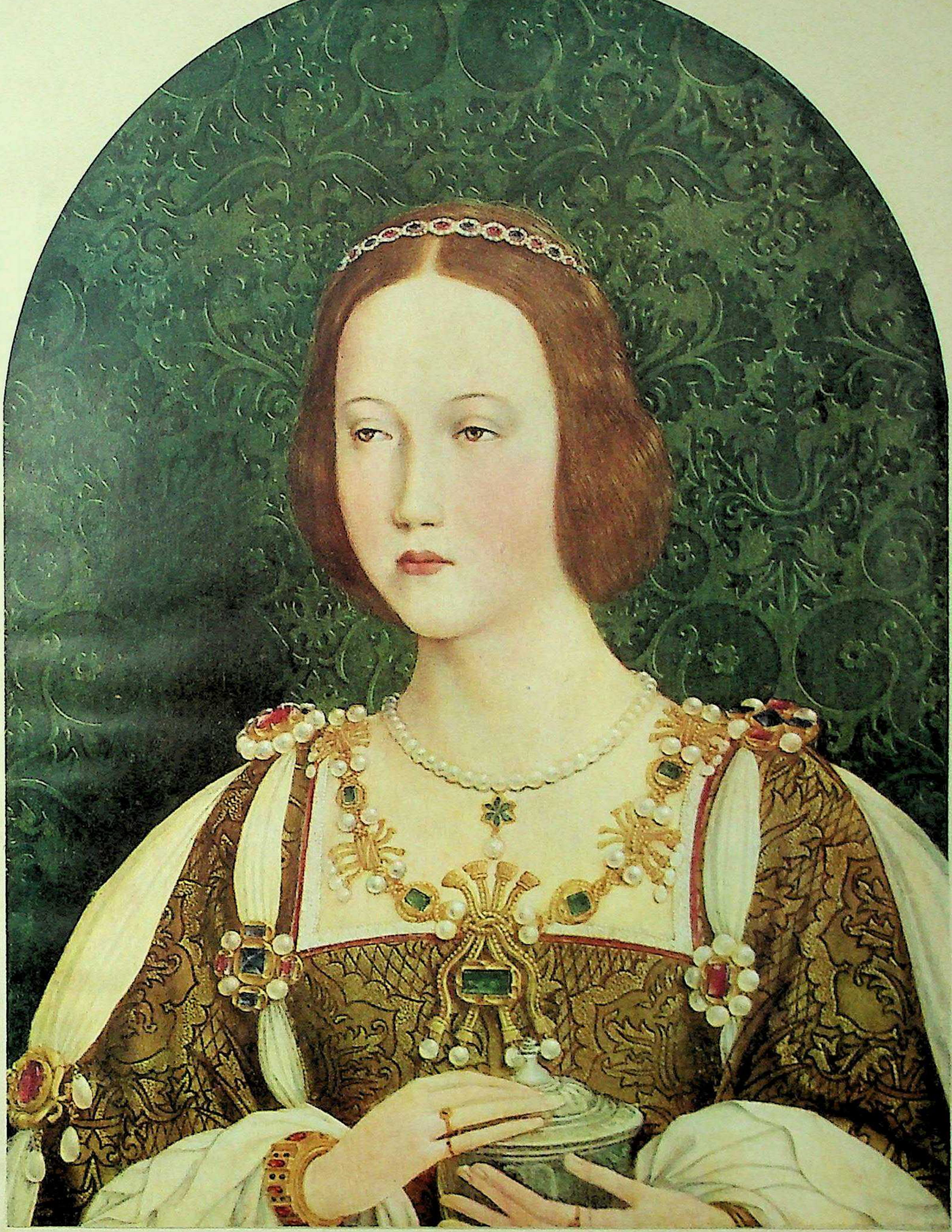

Plate 3

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V AT THE BATTLE OF MÜHLBERG

Born 1500. Lord of the Netherlands and Burgundy 1506; King of Spain and Naples (with Spanish America) 1516; Archduke of Austria 1519; Elected Emperor of Germany 1519; dominions increased by conquest of Mexico 1522, and by conquest of Peru 1535; abdicated 1555–6. Died 1558

TITIAN

Madrid: Prado Museum

The Hapsburg prince, who had power over the millions of lives indicated by the date-notes set above, was grandson of Isabella the Catholic, and son of her daughter known as Juana la Loca because in fact she was insane. He was nineteen when he was elected Emperor; and in May the next year, before he went to Germany, he came to England on a private visit to Henry VIII who was then twenty-nine. Charles' rivals in the Imperial election had been Francis I of France and Henry himself—though Henry's candidature had been more a gesture to keep himself and his country in the limelight than a serious proposal. Charles had won because he had the backing of German big business and the head of the Fugger firm of Augsburg, a vehement fighter against the Reformation, who provided 100,000 gold florins for bribery purposes and then wrote insolently to him: "It is known and undeniable that Your Imperial Majesty could not have secured the Imperial Crown without me" (*Es cosa sabida é innegable qué V.M.I. no habria podido lograr la corona imperial sin mi . . .*). Charles' English visit was ostensibly to discuss with Henry and his aunt Queen Catherine of Aragon the possibility of his marriage with their daughter Princess Mary (Plate 5), who was then four years old and betrothed to the Dauphin; but in fact the purpose of the visit was to circumvent Francis I with whom Henry was about to swear friendship. Charles stayed for five days in England and left for Flanders on May 31, the same day that Henry and Catherine crossed to Calais for the Field of the Cloth of Gold. A month later Charles and Henry met again, this time in France, and the completion of the double-crossing was arranged. Two years later, in 1522, Charles went again to England and was publicly and lavishly welcomed while his agents were introducing the Inquisition to the Netherlands and beginning their hideous persecutions.

Titian's noble picture shows Charles as leader of an armed onslaught against the German Protestants whom he defeated at Mühlberg on the Elbe in 1547. I have referred in the Introduction to the circumstances of its production which reveal the Emperor in less Hitlerian aspects. The armour which he wears in the picture and his charger's caparison are still preserved in the Armoury at Madrid.

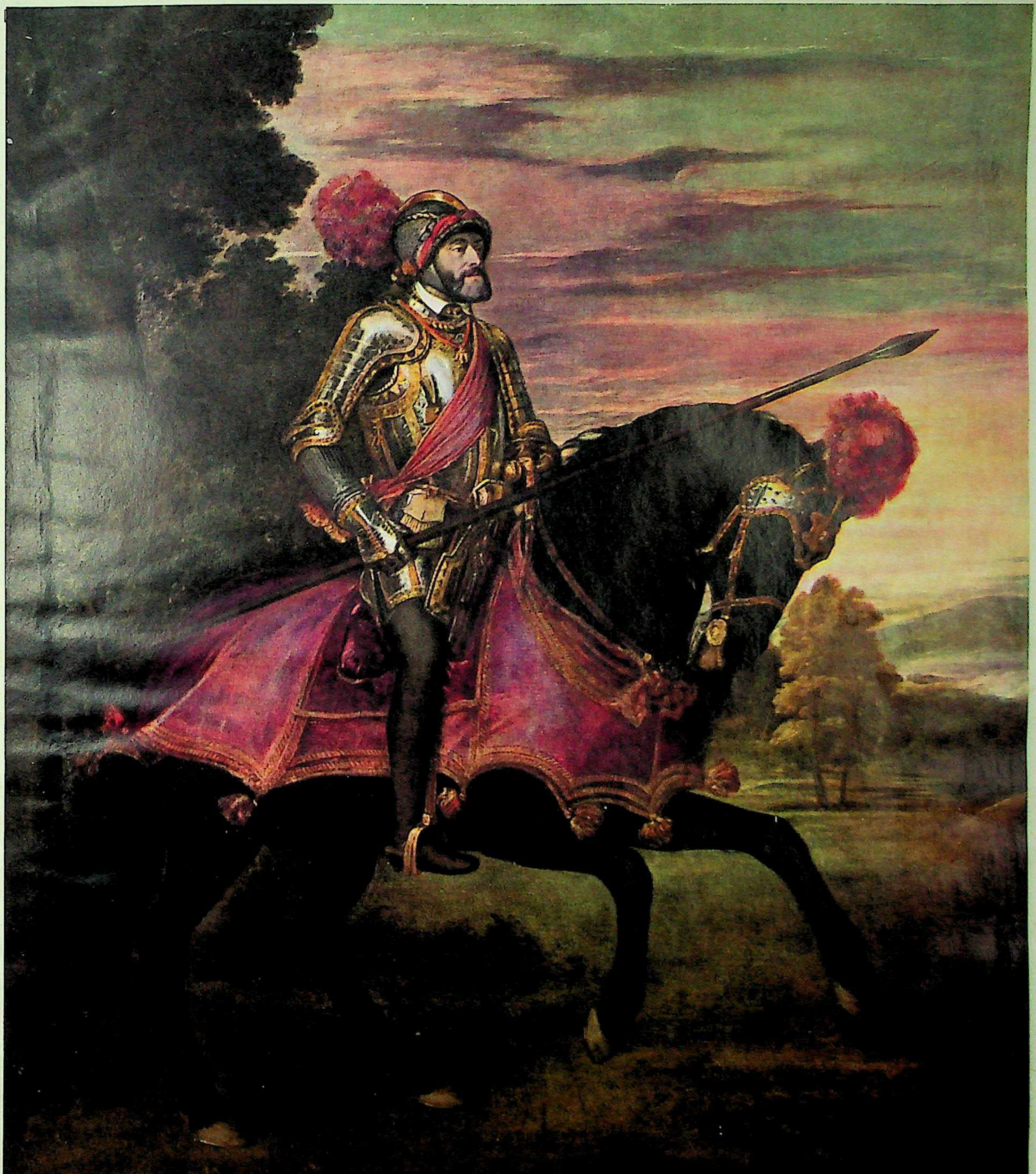

Plate 4

EDWARD VI

Born 1537. King of England 1547–1553

HOLBEIN

New York: Metropolitan Museum (Bache Collection)
Formerly London: Collection of Lord Lee of Fareham

Among the famous drawings by Holbein at Windsor Castle there are several portraits of Edward VI as Prince. One showing him in his second year is a study for the painting which (as mentioned in the Introduction) the artist gave to Henry VIII as a New Year's present in 1539; another shows the Prince at the age of four; and yet another (much reworked by a very inferior artist) dates from about the same time as the portrait reproduced here when the Prince was six as recorded in gold letters on the background: and other portraits of him (National Portrait Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum) suggest an appearance that was much the same.

The inscription thus tells us that this portrait was painted in 1543; and, as Holbein died at forty-six in the autumn of that year, this must be not only his last portrait of Edward but also among the last of his life's works. It is on a circular panel of oak about twelve inches in diameter and may have been designed as the lid of a jewelled box or casket—possibly indeed for a casket to be sent to Mary Queen of Scots, then seven months old, to whom the Prince was betrothed in July of this year as Henry VIII hoped in this way to unite the crowns of the two Kingdoms.

Three years later, before Edward was ten, Archbishop Cranmer crowned him King, placing three crowns in succession on his head—the Confessor's crown, the Imperial crown, and one made specially for this occasion; the boy King was specifically proclaimed the supreme head of the church; and thereafter he lives in history as a titular upholder of the Reformation, the writer of a diary with judgments on his elders, the founder of the Blue Coat School and a chain of Grammar Schools, and the deviser of the crown on his death 'to the L' Jane and her heires masles' (i.e. Lady Jane Grey whose grandmother figures as Plate 2).

As Holbein drew accurately we may assume that our portrait was an excellent likeness of Edward at the time. For the rest, we are told that he was short for his age, that his eyes were weak and that he sometimes suffered from deafness. His last illness was believed to have been started by a cold caught after playing tennis; but the malady was probably tuberculosis and its fatal end was admittedly hastened by bad medical treatment. He was sixteen when he died. Girolamo Cardano, a celebrated Milanese physician, had cast his horoscope and made it clear he would live to middle age.

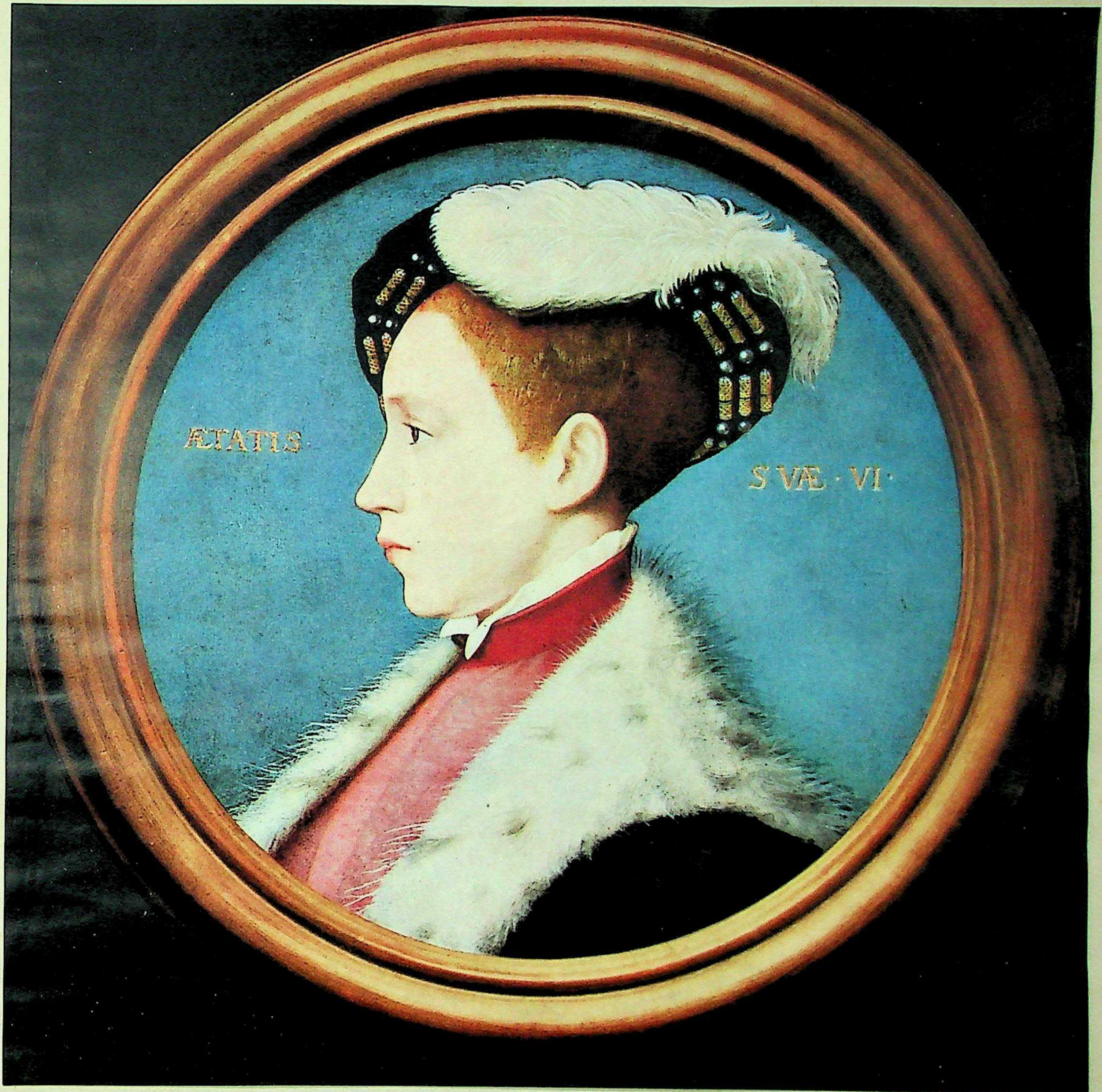
ÆTATIS
SVÆ · VI ·

Plate 5

QUEEN MARY I

Born 1516. First Queen Regnant of England 1553–1558

MOR

Madrid: Prado Museum

Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon and first cousin to the Emperor Charles V, was thirty-seven when she became Queen of England after Lady Jane Grey's claim had been rejected by the country. The Emperor at once proposed his son, Philip, then twenty-six and a widower, as suitor for her hand; and an exchange of portraits was arranged. Mary received a painting of Philip by Titian which mightily pleased her; and Antonis Mor was sent to London to paint the picture here reproduced for Philip.

The Queen sat to Mor before the end of 1553 and rewarded him with a gold chain, a pension of £100 a year and a Knighthood (so that he is properly referred to in English records as Sir Anthony More). Philip, it would seem, was satisfied when he received the picture, which was finished next year, for he came to England and married Mary at Winchester on July 25. When the Emperor Charles retired after his abdication to a monastery at Yuste he took this picture with him and gave it a place there in a small group of his family portraits.

We have a painting of Mary as princess aged twenty-eight by Joannes Corvus (National Portrait Gallery) and another showing her as Queen by Lucas d'Heere of Ghent (Society of Antiquaries); but it is Mor's painting which has fixed for ever our image of 'Bloody Mary' in whose reign so many English Protestants were burned.

Here she sits stiffly upright with a hint of mincing in her expression at the thought of the young suitor whose picture she found so charming; in her hand is the rose emblematic of her Tudor origin to which she owed her crown; her dress is sober, but she wears jewels round her headdress, her wrists and waist and neck, and on her chest an enormous square cut diamond with pendant pearl —perhaps the same jewel, the 'Mirror of Naples' that Louis XII gave to his pretty wife who then gave it to King Henry to appease his wrath when she married the Duke of Suffolk (*cf.* note on Plate 2).

Contemporary verbal portraits confirm this painting and add but little to it. Mary is described as of low stature, flat-chested, without eyebrows and so near-sighted that she could not read 'or do anything else without placing her eyes quite close to the object'. Her voice was deep-toned and rather masculine, and when she spoke in public she was easily heard.

She was the first English sovereign to receive an ambassador from Russia.

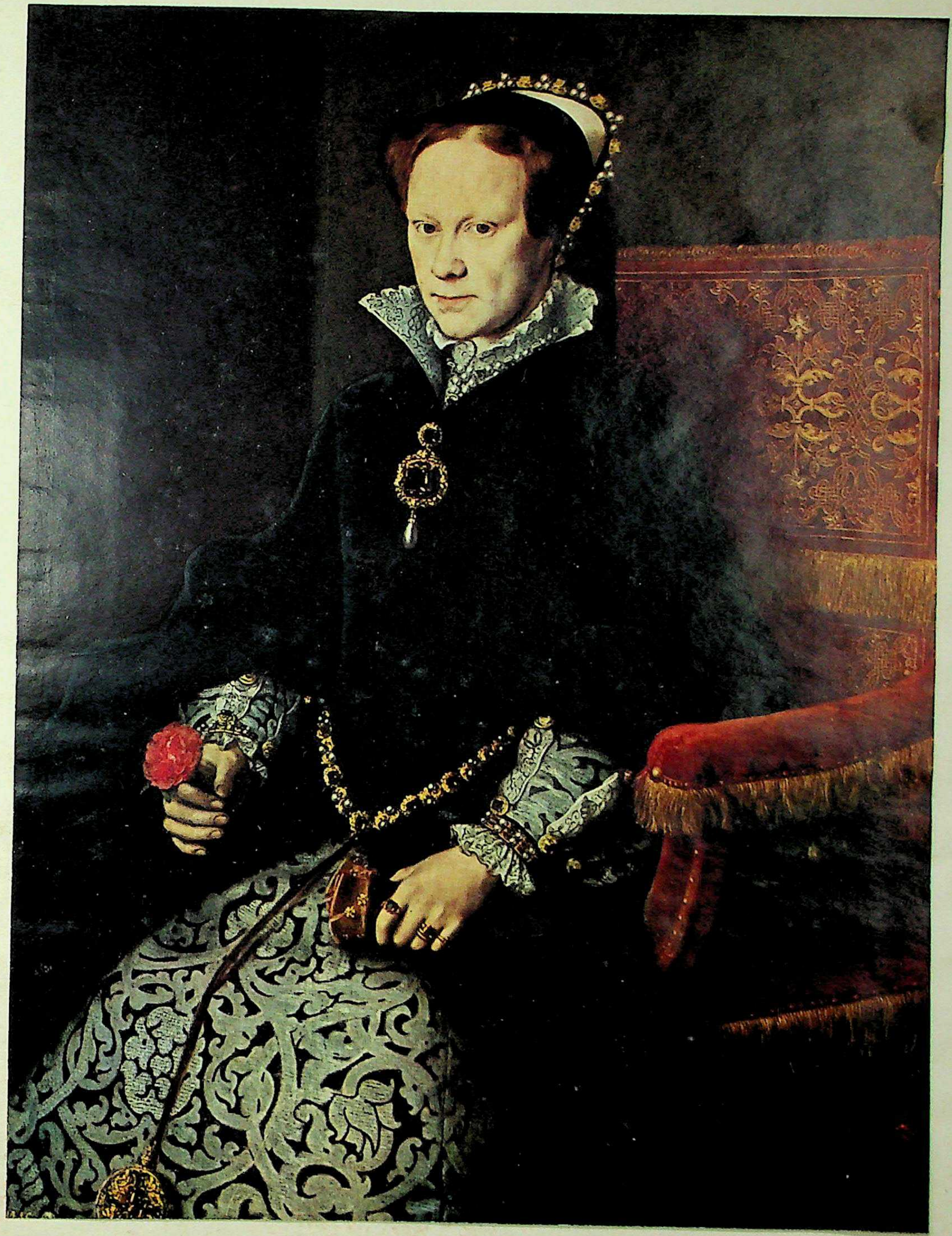

Plate 6

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Born 1533. Queen of England 1558–1603

ARTIST UNKNOWN—PRESUMED ENGLISH

London: National Portrait Gallery

In September 1592, when she was just on sixty, Queen Elizabeth was entertained in Oxfordshire by Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley, her Master of the Armoury and sometime Personal Champion in many tilts. Though the diversions provided were less lavish than those staged by Lord Hertford at Elvetham, the year before, they contained some pleasing conceits and the chanting of the refrain:

> 'Happie houre, happie daie
> That Eliza came this waie'

and this delightful picture (known as the Ditchley Portrait), showing the Queen standing on a Sheldon tapestry map of Oxfordshire with her feet on Sir Henry's property, records the occasion. The first four lines of the poem on the right of the picture read:

> 'The Prince of Light, the Sun by whom things live
> Of heaven the glorye and of earth the grace
> Hath no such glorye as your grace to give
> Where correspondencie may have no place'.

It is thus that Queen Elizabeth appeared at this period to a native painter and poet. Here is a pen picture by a foreigner who was present at some court routine in London: "Next came the Queen . . . very majestic; her Face oblong, fair, but wrinkled; her Eyes small, yet black and pleasant; her Nose a little hooked; her Lips narrow, and her Teeth black—(a defect the English seem subject to, from their too great use of sugar); she had in her Ears two pearls with very rich drops; she wore false Hair, and that red; upon her Head she had a small Crown. . . . Her bosom was uncovered, as all the English ladies have it, till they marry; and she had on a Necklace of exceeding fine jewels; her Hands were small, her Fingers long, and her Stature neither tall nor low; her air was stately, her manner of speaking mild and obliging. That day she was dressed in white Silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans, and over it a Mantle of black silk, shot with silver threads. As she went along in all this state and magnificence, she spoke very graciously, first to one, then to another, whether foreign Ministers, or those who attended for different reasons, in English, French and Italian; for, besides being well skilled in Greek, Latin, and the Languages I have mentioned, she is mistress of Spanish, Scotch, and Dutch; Whoever speaks to her, it is kneeling; now and then she raises some with her Hand. . . . In the Antichapel next the Hall where we were, Petitions were presented to her, and she received them most graciously, which occasioned the acclamation of LONG LIVE QUEEN ELIZABETH! She answered it with, I thank you my good PEOPLE."*

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* Paul Hentzner, *A Journey into England*, 1598. (Quoted in Hugh Macdonald's anthology *On Foot.* Oxford University Press, 1942.)

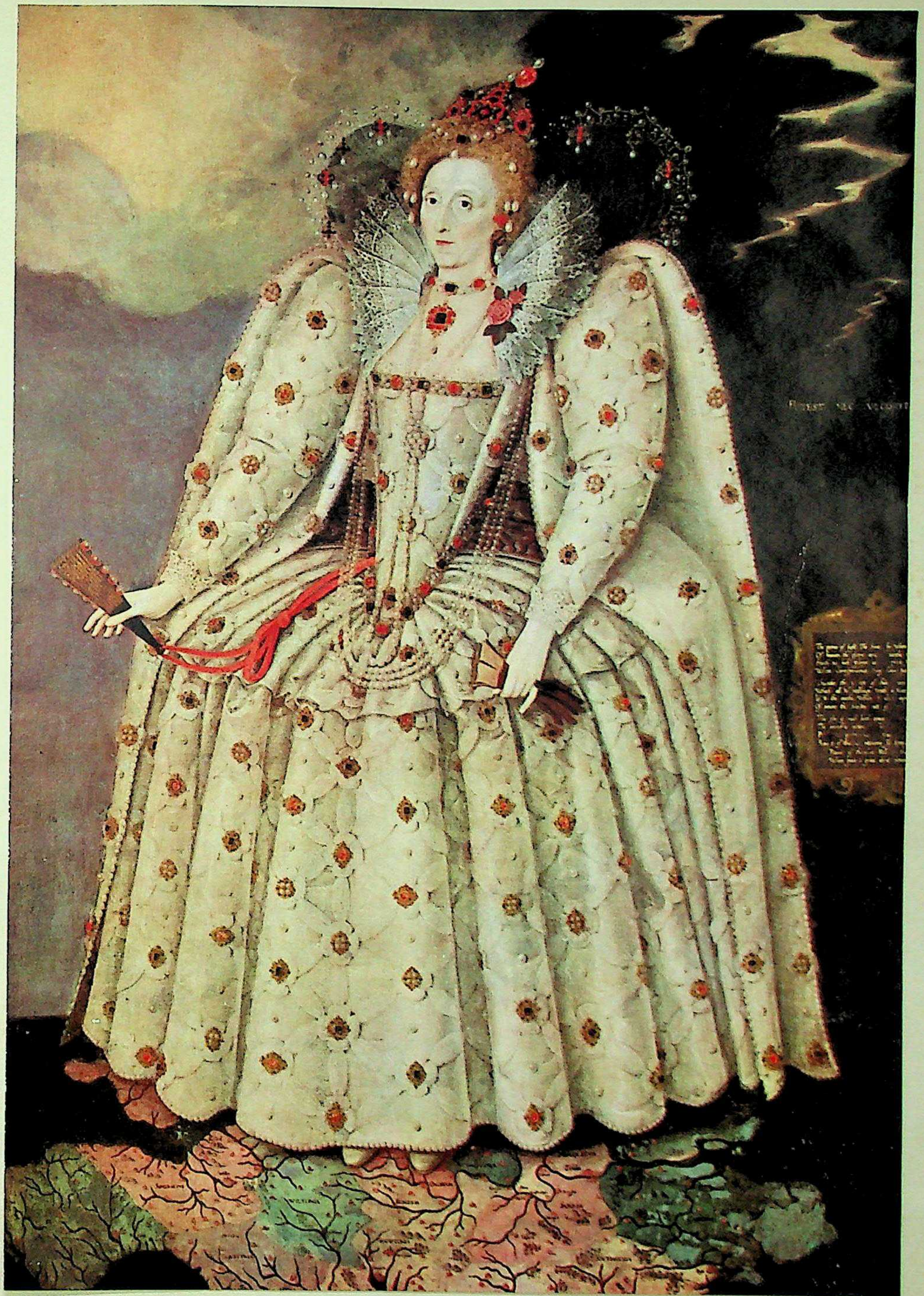


Plate 7

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA WITH HER DWARF

Born 1609. Married Charles I of England 1625. Died 1669

VAN DYCK

U.S.A.: Collection of Mr. William Randolph Hearst
Formerly England: Collection of Lord Northbrook

Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV of France and sister of Louis XIII, was sixteen when she married Charles I in the year of his accession, and he was twenty-five. She was a very French-looking girl, with dark eyes in an ivory face, who soon made friends at court but never became widely popular in England because she was a Roman Catholic and given to political intriguing. But she stood valiantly by her husband in his troubles and laboured incessantly to procure funds and arms for his service from abroad. When she received the news of his execution she was in Paris with her daughter Henrietta—then aged four and destined to be the wife of 'Monsieur' the Duc d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV (Plate 10) and the mother of Marie Louise, Queen to Charles II of Spain, son of Philip IV (Plate 8); and she was then so destitute that she had to keep the child in bed for want of means to light a fire.

When this splendid portrait was painted Queen Henrietta Maria was still under thirty and Van Dyck was at the summit of his career. The dwarf beside the Queen is Jeffery Hudson who had been in her service for some years. Hudson was the son of a butcher of Oakham, Rutland, who kept and baited bulls for George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham. At the age of nine, when he was still only eighteen inches high, his father gave him to the Duchess of Buckingham. When the King and Queen some time later dined with the Duke and Duchess, the dwarf was served up in a pie and on emerging so amused the Queen that the Duchess was constrained to present him to her. Later he grew to three feet nine inches—as he is shown in this picture. He was with the Queen when she went across to Paris and there, in 1649, he got into trouble and had to leave her service for shooting a man dead in a duel—his opponent not having taken him seriously had armed himself only with a squirt. After the Restoration, when the Queen returned, he also came back to England; and in his old age he served Charles II in ways which brought him payment from the secret service funds in 1680 and 1681.

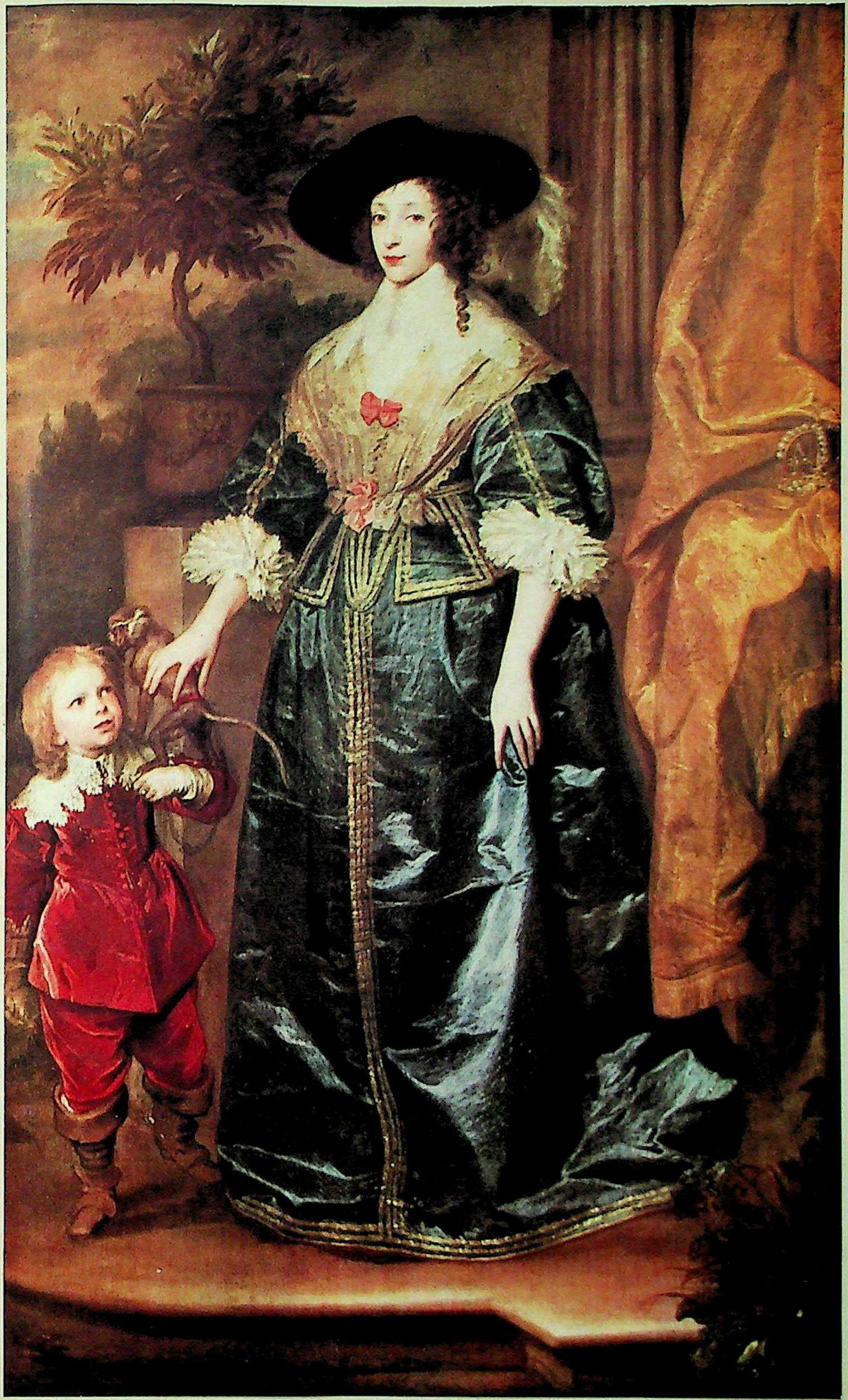


Plate 8

PHILIP IV

Born 1605. King of Spain 1621–1665

VELAZQUEZ

London: National Gallery

Velazquez was probably thirty-four when he painted this portrait and the King twenty-eight. The King wears the embroidered suit in which he appeared on December 1, 1633, when he led the festivities at his new villa the Casa del Buen Retiro (presented to him by the Conde Duque de Olivares). In the portraits theretofore painted of him by Velazquez he wears conspicuously sober clothes (for he had tried to restrict extravagant costume at his court and in his establishment of a thousand persons); but for this house-warming party the Queen herself, Isabella of Bourbon, had presented him with this suit of brown velvet embroidered in silver and he could hardly refuse it—for *noblesse oblige*. He wears, it will be noted, the Order of the Golden Fleece (*Toison de Oro*) on a golden chain. The chain too was appropriate for a special occasion; for though in the early Burgundian days of the Order the gold chain had been obligatory and any Knight of the Order who omitted to wear it had to make atonement (*peine de faire dire une messe de quatre solz et quatre solz donner pour Dieu*)—a silk ribbon for general use had since been made permissible and Philip himself usually wore the Order on such a ribbon with his normal dress, as we see in the earlier full length portrait in Madrid (No. 1182). But even in the unusually rich attire of our picture he wears the new type of simple collar, the *golilla*, designed by himself in 1623 (the same year in which he made Velazquez his court painter).

In the earlier portraits painted by Velazquez the King is shown clean-shaven. But here he is seen with an upturned moustache which he kept at night encased in perfumed leather covers (*bigoteras*)—a procedure followed at a later date by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, who used a contraption attached to his ears (*Schnurrbartbinder*), and by his admirers who used a popular model called "*Es ist erreicht*".

The document which the King holds in his hand is inscribed: "Senor Diego Velazquez Pintor de . . ." and is I take it the royal authority appointing him 'Gentleman of the Wardrobe' (*Ayuda de guardaropa*) which happened at this time.

As indicated in the Introduction, I have a soft corner for Philip IV, and I confess to a great affection for this picture. For it is admirably painted and the King stands with engaging simplicity a little ashamed of his rich dress.

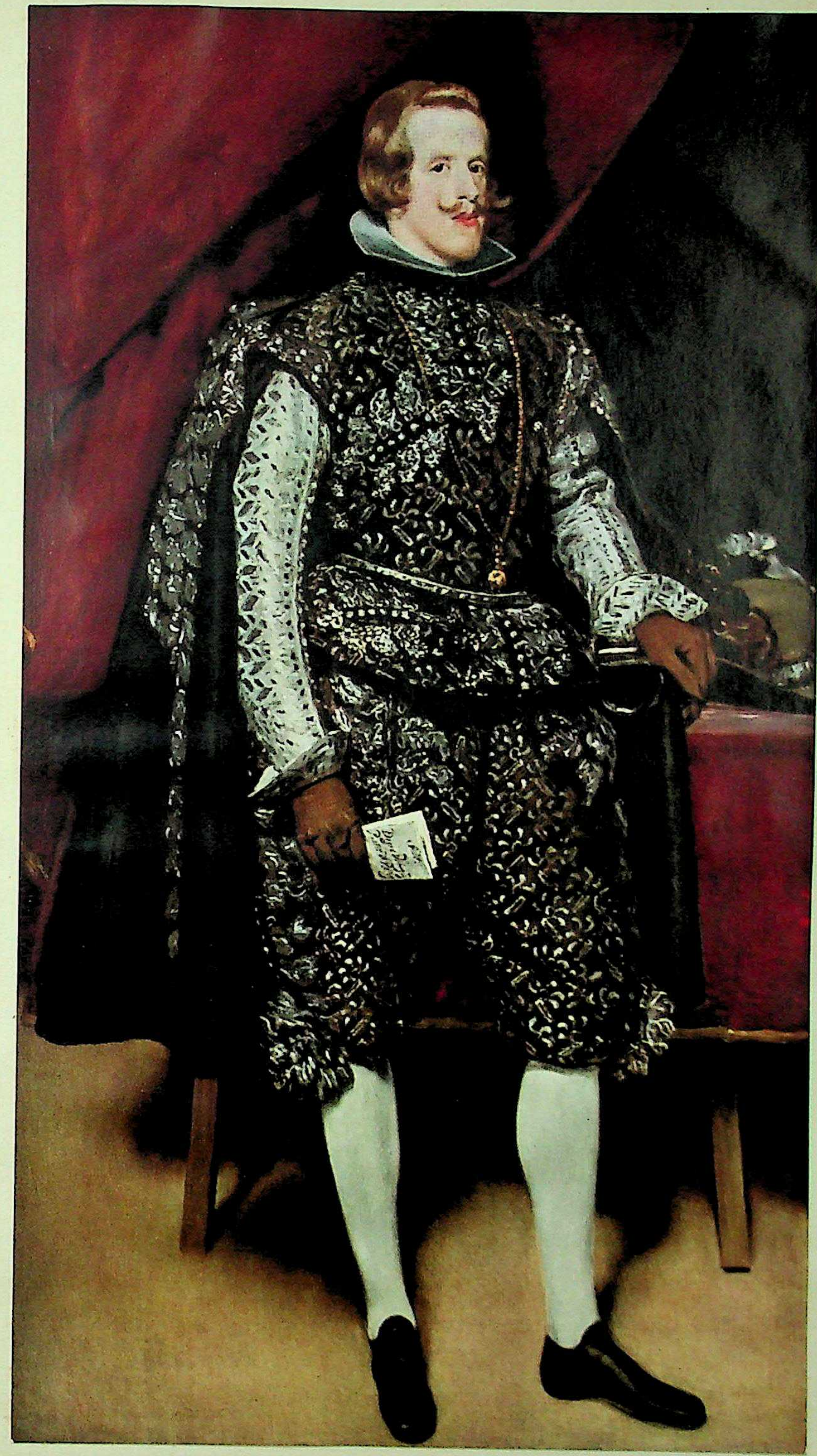


Plate 9

THE INFANTA MARGARETA OF SPAIN WITH HER MAIDS OF HONOUR AND DWARFS

Las Meninas or *La Familia*

The Infanta Margareta born 1651; Empress of Germany 1666–1673

VELAZQUEZ

Madrid: Prado Museum

This most celebrated picture was painted in 1656 when Velazquez was fifty-seven and the Infanta Margareta, daughter of Philip IV's second Queen, Mariana of Austria, was five years old. Since Velazquez painted the King in his brown and silver suit (Plate 8) he had been made successively Gentleman of the Bedchamber (*Ayuda de Camara*) and Chamberlain (*Aposentador de Palacio*); and here he is shown with the Cross of Santiago on his breast—a detail added later as he was not invested with the habit of the Order till 1659, the year before his death.*

The singular composition of this picture, originally known as *La Familia*, has never been satisfactorily explained. It is usually suggested that Velazquez was painting a double portrait of the King and Queen on the canvas shown on the left; that the King and Queen as they stood posing were reflected in the little mirror behind the artist; that the Infanta had come in with her attendants (*la familia*) to greet her parents and formed a group which pleased the King who said to the artist "You ought to paint what I see now—including yourself at the easel"; and that Velazquez did so. Such may indeed be the explanation—(though no such double portrait of the King and Queen exists or has ever been recorded as existing). But as I have set down elsewhere, I believe that the whole picture was painted in a mirror and records exactly what the painter himself saw in the mirror as he stood at his easel. The Infanta, I imagine, had been posing for her portrait; the sitting is over and her kneeling Maid of Honour offers her a beaker of water; but the child has caught sight of herself in the mirror and finds the image more intriguing than the water; and it was Velazquez standing behind them who said "I must paint the whole scene as I see it in that mirror now". †

I have seen references to a sketch for this picture in an English private collection, and it is I think quite certain that *Las Meninas* was painted not from life, but from some sketch. The maids and dwarfs, perhaps the Infanta herself, may have posed for details in the final life-size version; but the essence of this first and greatest of Impressionist paintings was assuredly a sketch made very swiftly 'at one go'.

It will be noted that by the time this picture was painted the King's desire to simplify the Court apparel (referred to in my note on Plate 8) had been set at nothing by the ladies whose clothes and coiffures had become more elaborate and fantastic than ever before.

No reduced colour reproduction can possibly do justice to this very large picture. Ours gives the general tonal relations, but in parts the ochre yellows are understated.

* There is an old story that the King was so delighted with the picture that he painted on the cross with his own hand (*cf.* Introduction).

† *cf.* my *Dutch Painting* (Faber and Faber). Chapter titled 'Vermeer's Mirrors'.

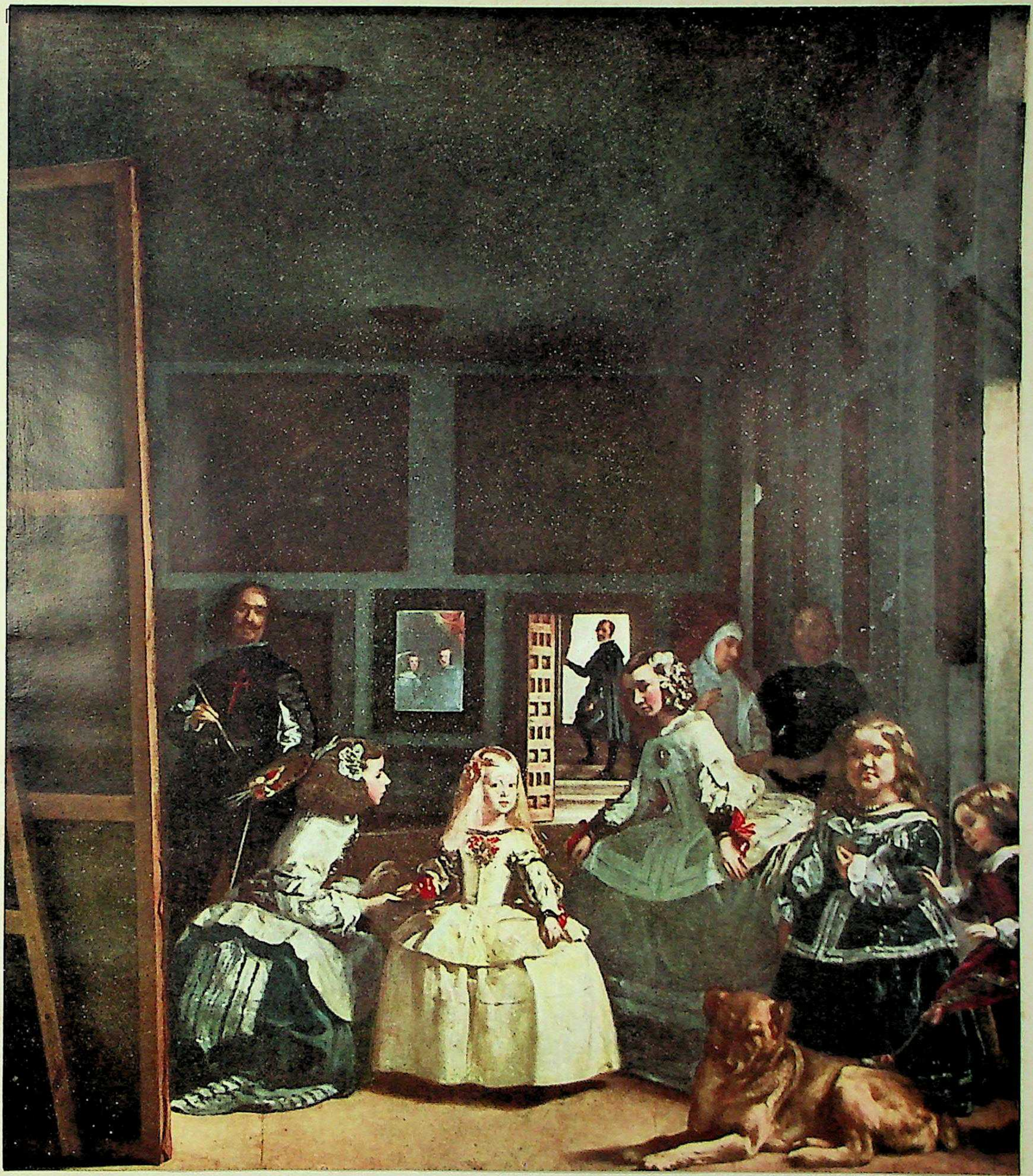


Plate 10

LOUIS XIV AND HIS HEIRS

Louis born 1638. King of France 1643–1715

LARGILLIÈRE

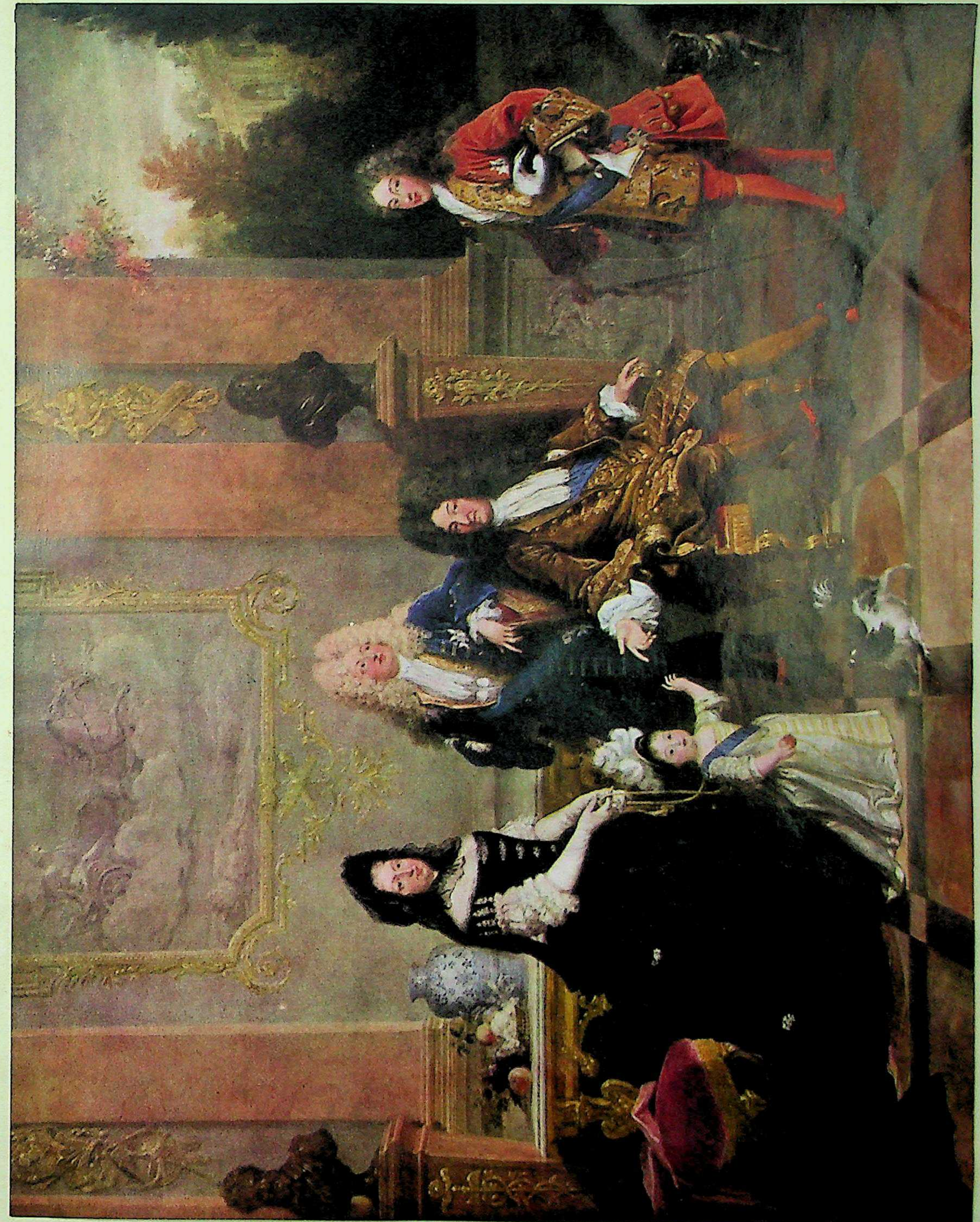
London: Wallace Collection

The King and his heirs are shown here in an apartment at Versailles with busts in the background of Henri IV (founder of the Bourbon dynasty and father of Queen Henrietta Maria (Plate 7) and Louis XIII (father of Louis XIV himself)). The year is probably 1710 when the little prince in the foreground, the Duc de Bretagne (who wears girl's clothes to show that he is still in charge of the ladies of the Royal household) was three. The little boy's father, the Duc de Bourgogne, aged twenty-eight, stands on the right in scarlet and gold. The Duc de Bourgogne's father, the Grand Dauphin, aged forty-nine and heir apparent, is in blue velvet behind the King. The lady in black is the Duchesse de Ventadour who, as *gouvernante* to the little great-grandson, holds him symbolically in leading strings.

The King, informally seated, is seventy-two; and he was destined to outlive all his descendants represented here. For the timid and neurotic Grand Dauphin, who looked forward to his accession with terror, died in 1711, and both the Duc de Bourgogne and the little Prince succumbed to a measles epidemic in 1712. But the Bourbon succession nevertheless persisted; it had already been secured in Spain where the Grand Dauphin's son had succeeded Philip IV's son Charles II as Philip V; and it was to continue in France, when the Duc de Bourgogne's third son, born in the year this picture was probably painted, became Louis XV in 1715.

To modern eyes the figures in this picture seem very ceremoniously attired; the Duc de Bourgogne's golden waistcoat is elaborately embroidered beneath the velvet coat; the Grand Dauphin wears the enormously long wig which is said to have been designed for him in order to conceal a deformity in his shoulders; and the little Prince's clothes are far too constricting for our ideas of nursery comfort. But to those accustomed to the incredible pomp and circumstance of Versailles in the King's old age, the group appeared as it was meant to appear, an informal presentment of a family party in morning unceremonial 'undress'; and the final touch in this conception is given by the spaniel and the poodle which are clearly free to wander as they please.

It has been suggested that this picture is by François de Troy; but the French artists Gros and Horace Vernet a century ago ascribed it to Largillière.



continued from page 3]

Infanta Margareta (Plate 9); and Rigaud, painter of the grand official portrait. Rigaud's picture was originally ordered in 1701 as a present from the King to the court of Madrid where his grandson had just succeeded Charles II as Philip V. But when the King saw the picture he so greatly approved it that he sent it to the throne room at Versailles and had a copy made for Spain. For it was thus that Louis XIV saw himself. And it is thus that, thanks to this celebrated portrait, the world has seen him since.

In our picture *Louis XIV and his heirs* (Plate 10) the King is nearly ten years older than in the Rigaud official portrait, and he is less formally depicted because this, as I point out in my note on the reproduction, is essentially a family scene; and Largillière, to whom it is ascribed by the Wallace Collection authorities, was never officially a court painter but held a position, new in this period, of an artist patronized by Court circles because he was a leading member of a Royal Academy—in this case of Colbert's foundation the French *Académie royale de peinture et sculpture* (which was launched, on paper, in 1648, but had little authority till twenty years later). This, the first of the painters' Academies, as we know them everywhere today, established its own art schools and thereby challenged and eventually superseded the old artists' guild; by securing royal patronage for the institution as a whole, it rendered nugatory the advantage to individual artists of royal or noble patronage; and by itself proclaiming its self-elected members the heads of their profession, it demanded for them all, regardless of their merits, that independent professional status which hitherto had only been achieved by artists like Titian, Poussin, Rubens, Van Dyck and Mor on the strength of their personal energy and talents. Largillière painted a portrait of Le Brun, the Academy's first President, in 1686, and was then himself elected a member; he was one of the Academy's professors in 1710, its director in 1738 and its chancellor when he died (financially ruined by the Law crash) in 1746. His most interesting works, from the standpoint of this volume, may have been the large compositions he painted for the Hôtel de Ville in Paris which were destroyed in the Revolution, for the subjects included: *The Provost of the Merchants and the Sheriffs of Paris deliberating on the banquet given to Louis XIV by the City of Paris on the occasion of his convalescence Jan.* 30, 1687; *The Marriage of Louis XIV's grandson, the Duc de Bourgogne, with Marie Adelaide de Savoie* 1697; and *The Coronation of the Duc d'Anjou as Philip V of Spain*, 1701. Largillière, though born in Paris and trained in Antwerp, began his career as an assistant to Lely in England; he was invited by Charles II to remain here but preferred to return to France; he paid a later visit to England to paint James II and his Queen; and, as those who know their National Portrait Gallery will remember, he painted *James Stuart and his sister Louisa* showing the Old Pretender at the age of seven and his sister at the age of three in 1695.

English readers, looking at our last plate, *Louis XIV and his heirs*, will recall that the picture was painted when the War of the Spanish Succession (in which Marlborough won the battles of Blenheim and Malplaquet) was drawing to its end; and those who know Fisher's 'History of Europe' will recall his dictum that the Peace of Utrecht (1713) marked the point after which religious and dynastic motives as springs of policy declined. And thus this group of royal portraits ends with Louis XIV who said to his great-grandson, the future Louis XV: "*Mon fils, vous allez être un grand roi; ne m'imitez pas dans le goût que j'ai eu pour les bâtiments ni dans celui que j'ai eu pour la guerre. Tâchez de soulager vos peuples, ce que je suis assez malheureux pour n'avoir pu faire.*"

Considered as examples in the history of portrait painting the pictures reproduced here cover a wide range. Plates 1, 2, 4 and 6 show the Gothic tradition wherein first the Frenchmen Fouquet and Jean Clouet, and later Holbein, were outstanding; portraits of this kind were all based on drawings which the artist himself made from the sitter in an hour; the paintings were made in the artist's workshop, all the hack work (clothes, jewellery and so on) being usually the work of pupils and assistants. In Mor's portrait *Queen Mary I* (Plate 5) we have the full accomplishment of high-Renaissance science but procedures which still, I fancy, were very much the same. Van Dyck, however, was an innovator; he painted right away from the sitter in oil colours, making a head study on grey background in a couple of hours; thereafter his work also was done without the sitter, and he had models posing for the hands and so on and pupils and assistants painting the draperies and clothes. Both Titian and Velazquez, I fancy, must have painted the whole of the works correctly ascribed to them by their own hands; for both were so passionately concerned with aesthetic and pictorial 'quality' that their sensibility would surely have suffered from approximate performance by assistants. Both, of course, like Van Dyck and the earlier artists, only called on their royal sitters to pose for a short time for the head.

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